

Week Ending Friday, August 1, 2003

### **The President's Radio Address**

*July 26, 2003*

Good morning. This weekend marks the 13th anniversary of the Americans With Disability Act, one of the great compassionate acts of American Government. Since becoming law, the ADA has helped to improve the quality of life for more than 50 million Americans with physical and mental disabilities. As a result, it is easier today for people with disabilities to find a job, to enter public buildings, and to live more independently in their communities. These are all welcome changes in American life.

Many citizens have dedicated themselves to serving the interests of persons with disabilities, and some of them are here with me at the White House. I am joined by members of the President's Committee on Mental Retardation. The men and women on this committee include people with disabilities as well as parents, teachers, health care workers, and advocates. They recently voted to change the committee's name to the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities, and I was pleased to sign an Executive order instituting that change.

There is much more we can do to assure that Americans with disabilities are treated with dignity and respect. In 2001, I announced the New Freedom Initiative to further promote the full participation of people with disabilities in all areas of society. As part of the New Freedom Initiative, we're giving States funding to help people with disabilities commute to work or purchase equipment that allows them to work from home. We are promoting homeownership for people with disabilities and educating builders about the need for more accessible rental housing.

We are working with Congress to provide record levels of funding for special education programs and to make sure the money is used to provide the most help to the most children. And we are making Government

web sites more accessible to people with disabilities so that they can more easily find information about services and programs of the Federal Government. We're also focused on providing better care to people with mental illness. I'm committed to making sure people get the treatment and support they need and don't fall through the cracks.

My administration continues to work with States to ensure full implementation of the Supreme Court's *Olmstead* decision. That decision rightly mandates that individuals with disabilities who can receive support and treatment in a community setting should be given an opportunity to live close to their families and friends whenever possible.

People with disabilities now have more freedom to do productive work and live independent lives. We're making good progress toward ensuring that persons with disabilities know the American Dream is meant for them. With changes in old ways of thinking, the development of new technologies, and the Federal Government's firm commitment to equality, more and more people with disabilities continue to become full participants in the American life.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2 p.m. on July 25 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 26. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 25 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

### **Remarks on Departure From Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland**

*July 28, 2003*

#### **Death of Bob Hope**

Today America lost a great citizen. We mourn the passing of Bob Hope. Bob Hope made us laugh, and he lifted our spirits. Bob